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ABSTRACT

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) were created because of racist beliefs that Blacks should not attend school with whites. Between 1854 and 1952, 123 HBCUs, both public and private, were established to educate Black people. Currently HBCUs are still very much alive, but the legacy of separate and unequal education has left an impact that continues to affect HBCUs. Many struggle with funding issues, infrastructure problems, and faculty shortages. Some suggestions about how psychology education at HBCUs can be enhanced in the 21st century are: (1) improve psychology programs and facilities at each of the 56 HBCU institutions that offer baccalaureate psychology degrees; (2) encourage faculty development; (3) encourage traditionally-white institutions to recognize the needs of psychology departments at HBCUs; (4) increase collaborative efforts between HBCUs and traditionally white institutions; (5) encourage alumni who have pursued graduate degrees in psychology to provide guidance about how to improve their departments in the future; (6) encourage grant-giving organizations to provide opportunities to HBCUs; (7) endowments and fundraising; and (8) publicize successes. Contains nine references. (JBJ)

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HBCUs and Psychology Education: Toward The 21st Century

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My task this morning is to discuss the history of HBCUs and their current status with regard to Psychology education. I will also provide some recommendations for improving psychology education at HBCUs in the 21st century.

Historically - Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) are living testimony to human endurance in the face of tremendous odds. These institutions were created because of racism and the belief that Blacks were not good enough (or human enough) to attend school with whites. Black people were completely disenfranchised from the educational system, and even free Blacks had difficulty getting a college education in both the North and the South. In the early to mid 1800's, both Berea College and Oberlin College in Ohio accepted Blacks sporadically, but no American schools consistently accepted Blacks for college during that period. Between 1854 and 1952, 123 HBCUs, both public and private were established to educate Black people. The Freedman's Bureau, created by the federal government in 1865 to deal with the newly - freed slaves, established Howard University in 1867 as the only federally-sponsored college or university for Blacks in the United States. Other Historically-Black schools were established during the Reconstruction period, when Blacks obtained limited political power, if only briefly. For example, during the 1860s and 1870s, Blacks ran for and obtained public office in states like South Carolina, which had 2 Black lieutenants governors, 2 Black speakers of the House, and 1 Black secretary of State, between 1867 and 1876. These Blacks and many other concerned citizens were instrumented in establishing private and public schools for Blacks, including Fisk University (Tennessee

1866), Hampton University (Virginia, 1864), Jackson State University (Mississippi, 1877), and one of the first of its kind, Lincoln University (Pennsylvania, 1854). White philanthropists, religious organizations, and Black benevolent societies also established religiously-oriented colleges for Blacks, such as Claflin College) (Methodist, 1869) and Benedict College (Baptist, 1870), both of which are located in South Carolina. The Morrill Act of 1862, which established land-grant, public Colleges and Universities, had limited impact on the lives of Black people until 1890, when a second Morrill Act was passed establishing land-grant schools for Blacks. This act created segregated land-grant colleges in Oklahoma, Texas, Missouri, Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, Kentucky, Georgia, North and South Carolina, Florida, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, Delaware and Maryland.

By the 1890's, the idea of "separate but equal" education was firmly entrenched in the American psyche and educational system, as the famous Plessy vs. Ferguson case of 1896 demonstrated. But certainly, HBCUs were never equal to traditionally white institutions in spite of this popular expression. Many of the public HBCUs began as industrial, mechanical and agricultural training centers, rather than liberal arts colleges (private schools). The missions of these institutions differed from white schools, in that most HBCUs had a strong emphasis on teaching and the uplift of Black people through community service. Additionally, these institutions usually had to educate a different kind of student than the traditionally white college. Remember,

until the 1860's, Blacks were often forbidden to learn to read and write, so the courses offered at HBCUs had to include this remedial training. Willie and Edmonds (1978) reported that even as late as 1916, some HBCUs were not teaching college - level material to many poorly prepared and illiterate students who attended the schools. Others were learning a trade or completing high school courses. Only a few thousand were pursing college degrees.

By the 1900's, several HBCUs had developed segarated professional schools: Meharry Medical College (1876) and Howard University (1867) were the first two schools to offer Blacks medical and dental training. Until 1968, 80% of Black physicians and dentists obtained their degrees from these two institutions. Additionally, schools of Law were established at Texas Southern U, Florida A and M University, and South Carolina Agricultural and Mechanical College, now known as South Carolina State University. Several famous Black attorneys and judges attended these Law schools. South Carolina Supreme Court Justice Ernest Finney, Jr. attended the Law school at SCSU. Like many of his colleagues, Finney taught school after completing his law degree because he was unable to practice law in the State of South Carolina. The reason? Blacks were not allowed to take the bar exam in that State when he obtained his law degree.

Once the Supreme Court outlawed segregated education in 1954 (Brown vs Board of Education), the status of HBCUs began to change. As Blacks were admitted to traditionally white schools in larger numbers, the need for segregated professional schools diminished.

Most graduate and professional school programs at HBCUs were eliminated and the HBCUs began to change. Some people even began to wonder if HBCUs were necessary any more, given the desegregation of traditionaly white schools.

How are HBCUs doing today? Suffice, it to say that HBCUs are still very much alive, and that many schools have made tremendous strides since the 1800s. But the legacy of separate and unequal education has left an impact that continues to affect HBCUs. Without doubt, there are some excellent HBCUs, but many of them struggle with common problems: they are underfunded, in need of new or revitalized physical facilities, and often have fewer faculty and staff than other institutions. Perhaps most importantly, many HBCUs remain true to their original missions: to educate the masses of people, and offer opportunities to those who otherwise might not receive a college education. This means that HBCUs often educate a different kind of student, who may need more developmental/remedial coursework, and much more individual attention from faculty and staff. Additionally, faculty at HBCUs are usuallly under considerable stress because they have heavier course loads (4-5 courses each semester is typical), more campus service responsibilities, more community service responsibilities, spend more time counseling students with academic and personal problems, and receive lower salaries than their counterparts at traditionally white institutions. Some small HBCUs may offer assistant faculty as little as $20,000 per year to teach five courses each semester.

HBCUs often differ from traditionally white schools with regard to their research emphasis. Because HBCUs have traditionally been teaching institutions, they may have some difficulty incorporating research into their academic environments. Typically, a portion of faculty want to become involved in research, but there is little institutional support for these faculty. The infrastructure necessary to conduct quality research (e.g., enough release time for faculty, getting a paid sabbatical, getting grant money channeled back to departments, getting adjunct instructors to teach courses, etc.) and even tangible rewards for doing research are often absent at the HBCU. Additionally, the stability of the institution's leadership (e.g., longevity of presidents, administrators, and even governors at state-supported schools) may effect the institutions and their personnel so adversely that they are unable to conduct high-quality research.

The propensity of faculty at HBCUs to be primarily teaching focused is best illustrated by Willie and Edmonds (1978). In 1973 they examined the status of faculty at HBCUs and found that only five to six percent of faculty had ever published an article. Faculty reported that these five factors were the primary prohibitors to publishing:

1) lack of money to do research
2) lack of time to do research
3) prejudice on the part of publishers who don't want articles using only Blacks as subjects or about "black" issues

4) lack of pressure from the institution to publish;

5) lack of support from the institution (including administrators and colleagues) to publish

Even though these data are 23 years old, many faculty at HBCUs would say exactly the same things today. As we approach the 21st century, it is imperative that HBCUs do whatever is necessary to allow faculty to develop and become productive in the area of research.

How does all of this affect psychology education at HBCUs? Why should anyone care? After all, do HBCUs teach that many psychology majors?

Clearly, psychologists who teach at HBCUs must "fight the good fight" if we want to produce high quality Black psychology majors. Those of us who teach at HBCUs must work hard to maintain excellence in our departments, even if we have limited resources. Not surprisingly, many psychology faculty at HBCUs have been doing just that. The fact is that of the 105 HBCUs listed in the Almanac of Higher Education, only fifty-three percent (56 schools) even offer psychology as a baccalaureate major (3 others offer the Associates degree in Psychology). This amounts to 5% of the one thousand ninety (1,090) schools in the United States that offer undergraduate level psychology degrees. But these HBCUs graduate <u>27%</u> of the Black psychology majors in our country! Most importantly, they are providing high-quality education to these students, because they are able to go on and pursue graduate degrees in psychology. The Statistical Record of Black America,

1990 edition, lists the baccalaureate origins of Black Ph.D.s in a variety of subjects. The list looks like a Who's Who of Historically Black institutions! The majority of Black Ph.D.'s in all subjects received their Bachelors degree from: Howard University (81), Tuskegee University (50), Morgan State University and Spellman University (both 41), Hampton University (38), Jackson State University (36), Southern University (34), North Carolina Central University (30), and the University of the District of Columbia (29). Therefore, it is imperative that we care about psychology departments at HBCUs. It would appear that they produce some of the most promising students the Black community has to offer. Since we are in urgent need of more Black and minority professionals in the field of Psychology (only 3.4% of new psychology Ph.D.'s were Black in 1991-92), psychology education at HBCUs should be important to all of us.

What can be done to improve psychology education at HBCUs? I believe that each of the presenters will describe how psychology education at their institution has been improved, whether through research or via linkages with other institutions. I would like to offer just a few suggestions about how psychology education at HBCUs can be enhanced in the 21st century:

I. Improve psychology programs and facilities at each of the 56 HBCU institutions that offer baccalaurate psychology degrees. The HBCUs that offer psychology degrees must take the lead in this by making a commitment to psychology. These commitments should include more money

in the departmental budgets to allow for greater library holdings, more laboratory space, office space, computer terminals - whatever is needed to bring these departments into the 21st century. Funding the natural and computer sciences has often been of primary importance to the administrations of HBCUs, at the expense of the social sciences and the arts. Now, psychology faculty must begin to insist that our institutions provide the same emphasis on psychology so that our students can receive the best training possible.

II. Encourage Faculty Development. In 1973, faculty at HBCUs stated that their institutions did not provide pressure on them or support for them to pursue professional development. HBCUs must begin to encourage faculty to progress, because if faculty progress, our students will progress also.

Institutions can encourage faculty development by:

A) providing resources or "perks" when faculty attend State, Regional, or National Conventions annually.

B) Help faculty become more knowledgeable about research, including grant writing workshops, supporting collaborative research efforts with colleagues and students, etc.

C) Encourage faculty to publish! Provide the infrastructure and professional support faculty need to write up the results of their research, and allow them greater

latitude in the type of journal in which they can publish.

D) Provide paid release time and/or sabbatical leave to faculty who wish to engage in or who are actively engaged in research.

III. Encourage traditionally-white institutions to recognize the needs of psychology departments at HBCUs.

A) Stop the stereotype of HBCUs as useless, outdated and inferior. Willie and Edmonds quote a 1967 Harvard-based publication (untitled in their work) which stated that Black colleges were, "academic disaster areas." While much work is needed to improve some programs, we must recognize the high quality of psychology education that is offered at Morris Brown, Morehouse, Spellman, Howard, Hampton Tuskegee, and many other HBCUs. Considering the lack of resources and isolation from colleagues that many faculty from HBCUs must contend with, the programs are doing quite well. APA, APS, Psi Chi, Psi Beta, TOPPS, other organizations and of course APA's Division 2 can all play a role by encouraging HBCU faculty to participate in our organizations to the fullest degree. The more people see us, the more they will respect the quality of the programs we offer.

B) Develop programs within national organizations to help improve psychology departments at all HBCUs.

APA has taken the lead in this area. Through its Office of Ethnic Minority Affairs, APA has recently awarded three HBCUs grants to enhance their recruitment, retention, and training of minority students. Through this small beginning, Fisk University, Johnson C Smith University, and Morehouse College will have the funds to execute the initiatives each institution has developed for improving psychology education for its students. It is my hope that APA will continue these efforts until all 56 HBCUs that grant undergraduate psychology degrees have received not only financial support, but whatever assistance APA can provide them to help improve their psychology programs.

IV. Increase collaborative efforts between HBCUs and traditionally white institutions. It is sad that in South Carolina, many people at USC (University of South Carolina) do not know anything about the psychology department at SCSU, the only HBCU in the State to offer a baccalaureate psychology degree! Those who do know about the program believe it to be poor at best. While I make no claims that SCSU has a great department, we do have alumni who have successfully completed graduate degrees at traditionally white schools. Clearly, those of us who work in close proximity to one another must do more,

just to learn about each other, and then, to collabore with each other as much as possible. In their presentation, Dr. Jim Korn and his colleagues will describe one successful collaborative effort between Morehouse College and Saint Louis University.

V. HBCUs should encourage alumni who have pursued graduate degrees in psychology to come back and provide guidance about how to improve their departments in the future. These individuals know the strengths and weaknesses of the programs, the skills they needed in graduate school, and can provide valuable mentoring for new students.

VI. Encourage grant-giving organizations to provide opportunitues to HBCUs. While some improvements have been made, most funders prefer to give money to experienced researchers. These individuals typically don't work at HBCUs, so HBCUs are less likely to get major grant money. One program, sponsored by Howard University, the only HBCU to offer a Ph.D. in psychology, is trying to address this problem. The DARTAP program is training several novice researchers from selected HBCUs to learn how to write grants that will be submitted the National Institute for Drug Abuse (NIDA). The key components of the program that it is hoped will

be most helpful to faculty at HBCUs include a needs assessment for each novice researcher's school and department, and mentoring for novice researchers from experienced professionals who have already received NIDA funds. It is this type of program that will help faculty at HBCUs become ready for the 21st century. It is interesting to note that an HBCU is sponsoring this program to build up her sister schools.

VIII. Endowments and Fund-Raising. Many public HBCUs function without the benefit of large endowments, and others have a poor history of fundraining efforts. They have depended on the idea that State and Federal government funding would continue for these institutions. However, as the fiscal crises of our government increase, support for education will certain decrease. Therefore, HBCUs and théir alumni must become more active fund-raisers to secure the existence of HBCUs into the 21st century.

IX. Publicize our successes. Often, HBCUs are only mentioned in the media when there are negative outcomes associated with these schools. HBCUs must begun to publicize their successes so that individuals at other institutions can see the value of our institutions. The general public,

traditionally-white institutions, and those who fund research should know all of the successes that HBCUs have had over the years. Alumni of these institutions should proudly identify the aspects of the HBCU experience that helped them to succeed. In this way, all aspects of HBCUs can improve.

In closing, the twenty-first century is just around the corner. It would be a shame to let schools created in inequality in the 19th century remain unequal in the 21st.

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